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Publications




# *New Foundations for Ontario Education*

A SUMMARY

1995



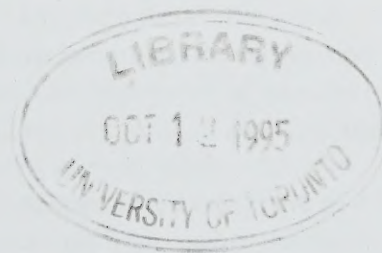


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# Letter from the Minister

March 1995

Since I became Minister of Education and Training two years ago, I have developed a new understanding of just how important the education system is to the future of our children and to the future of our province. I have learned how essential it is to preserve what is best in our school system, and also how vitally important it is for the system to change and grow to deal with a changing world.

I believe that all of us care about the education of our young people. It is because we all care that the government is responding to the report of the Royal Commission on Learning by embarking on a major reform of elementary and secondary school education. Our goal is to develop a system that is focused on the student, dedicated to excellence, and accountable to the public it serves. We are also determined to make the system a more democratic one, in which students, parents, and the broader community, as well as the ministry and school boards, have a voice. With the implementation of the initiatives you will read about on the following pages, we can renew our sense of pride in our educational achievements. Where necessary, I will be initiating new legislation to give effect to these reforms.

These initiatives will build on the commitment of thousands of dedicated teachers and concerned parents, and will harness the energy and expertise of everyone involved and interested in education to achieve one major goal: making the system better for our students.

This summary of the changes that have been announced has been prepared to help you understand our plans for Ontario's educational future.

Sincerely,



Dave Cooke  
Minister of Education and Training  
Ontario

# Introduction

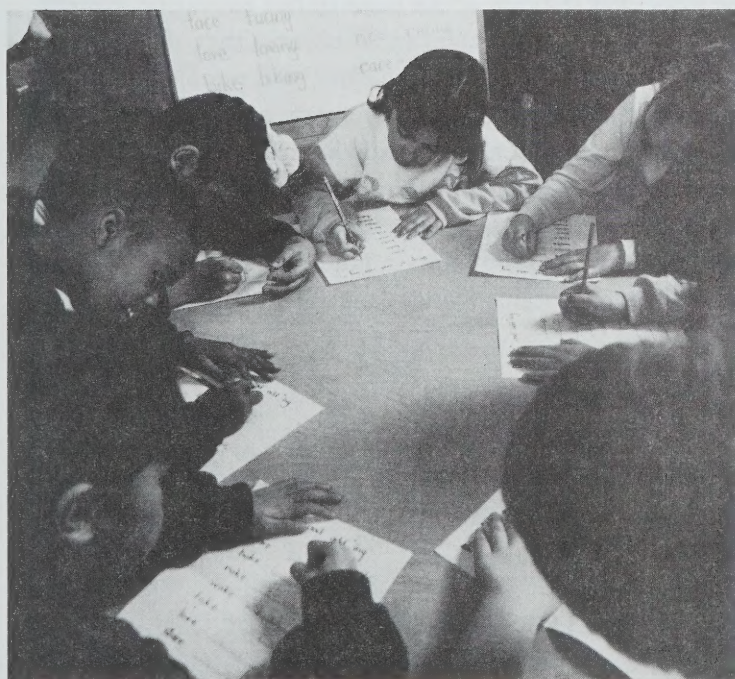
The Royal Commission on Learning was established in May 1993 to make recommendations to guide Ontario's reform of elementary and secondary education. Fundamental alterations in Ontario's education system are needed if the province is to meet its responsibility to educate students for successful participation in society and in the economy of the twenty-first century.

The decision to set up a royal commission was a response to growing public concern and dissatisfaction with the education system as it now stands. For some time, parents and taxpayers have been seeking assurances that all students are being challenged and supported in meeting high and relevant standards at school, that teachers have up-to-date skills, and that in these times of tight budgets, scarce public resources are being directed to the place where they will have the most impact – the classrooms of the province.

Students, parents, and other members of the community have also expressed a strong desire to have more say in educational decision making. They expect a system that can clearly demonstrate students' achievements and progress and that is publicly accountable for results.

In order to address such concerns, the five-member Royal Commission on Learning was set up to conduct a comprehensive review of Ontario's elementary and secondary school education – the first such review since the Hall-Dennis report of 1968.

The commission was asked to make recommendations about the purpose and direction of our school system, the programs offered in our schools, the mechanisms for ensuring accountability, and the organization of the school system as a whole.



The commission's report, *For the Love of Learning*, is based on consultations with almost 1,400 groups and individuals in twenty-seven cities, and more than 3,600 written submissions.

In their recommendations, the commissioners focused on what helps learning and on the roles and responsibilities of the key players in education – the student and the teacher. They also emphasized the common hope and expectation of Ontario residents for high levels of relevant learning, and outlined a number of supports and policies that are necessary to achieve this outcome. Two major themes of the report are that all children should receive a high-quality education and that parents and students should be encouraged and helped to take a more responsible and active role in the education process.

Prior to the release of the commission's report in January 1995, the ministry had already begun to address these issues, and significant progress had been made in key areas. Over the past eighteen months, an initiative on violence-free schools has made it mandatory for school boards to have policies on violence prevention and to report violent incidents to the police and the ministry. The Ontario Parent Council was established in 1993 to provide advice to the Minister on educational issues and to recommend and support new ways of involving parents in educational decision making at the local level. A province-wide Grade 9 test was introduced in reading and writing in the 1993-94 school year and has been repeated in 1994-95. Mandatory antiracism and ethnocultural equity policies have also been developed and implemented by school boards.

There is much more to be done, however. The commission's report identified four "engines of change" that should drive education reform: community involvement; teacher education; investment in early-childhood education; and information technology. To these may be added a fifth engine of change – accountability. The ministry believes that making accountability an integral part of the system is also a fundamental condition for renewal. As well, the government believes that education dollars must be moved away from administration and directed to the classrooms – and the students – of the province.

To that end, the ministry itself is taking measures to become more efficient. It is reviewing its own activities and business practices with a view to making them more effective and responsive to current needs.

The ministry initiatives outlined on the following pages reflect the main conclusions of the commission's report. These initiatives constitute a practical and affordable plan for reforming education in Ontario, with little or no additional cost to the taxpayer.

It is important to point out that while some of these initiatives will take us in new directions, they will be carried out in a context that respects ongoing commitments and the principles that are at the basis of our education system. The commitment to equity and to a curriculum that ensures that all students are able to succeed, regardless of background or ability, will remain a key guiding principle as we work to reshape our education system to make it more efficient and effective. As well, care and sensitivity will be exercised in implementing initiatives that affect human resources and the interests of particular groups. The initiative pertaining to the reduction of school boards, for instance, will be considered in the context of the need to maintain public and separate school systems and to ensure full governance of French-language education by the francophone community.

The ministry is committed to lasting change and improvement in the education system. Dr. Michael Fullan has been appointed by the Minister as special adviser on implementation. Dr. Fullan is dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Toronto and is internationally recognized as an expert in educational change and implementation. He will work with the ministry to help us move from policy to practice.

The government has chosen to address the commission's main conclusions through its New Foundations reform plan. While this plan does not respond to or adopt each and every one of the commission's 167 recommendations, school boards and schools should not view this as a restriction on their plans or initiatives. Boards and schools can act on some of the recommendations without waiting for government direction. In the meantime, the changes scheduled for implementation and outlined in this document are true to the spirit that informed the commission's work: a desire to make Ontario's education system second to none.

# 1 Province-wide Curriculum and Reporting

## Background

Public concern about the apparent lack of clear, relevant, and high standards in Ontario schools has been increasing for some time. Parents and the broader community have frequently expressed the desire for more precise and comprehensive information about individual and collective student achievement, and also about the performance of schools and the system as a whole. The provincial auditor has noted a lack of consistency, efficiency, and accountability to the public in the Ontario school system. Finally, the performance of Ontario students on tests at the national and international levels has further intensified the demand for change.

The Ontario school system needs a comprehensive set of standards for achievement from Junior Kindergarten to the end of high school, as well as consistent methods for measuring results. It also needs a process of curriculum development that will eliminate inconsistencies, inequities, and expensive duplication of effort.

## Plan of Action

Clear, consistent, and high learning expectations and standards for student achievement are necessary if our school system is to provide high-quality education for all Ontario students. Programs should emphasize the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values in every area of the curriculum, and specific information about the educational standards used to measure performance should be available to parents, students, potential employers, educators, trustees, and other interested members of the community.

The ministry intends to take the lead in establishing the required high expectations and standards by providing a detailed provincial curriculum. A province-wide curriculum will also ensure consistency and eliminate costly duplication of effort among Ontario school boards. The new provincial curriculum will take into account Ontario's cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity, and will respect and accommodate the needs of the French-language community and the separate school system. It will also be flexible enough to enable schools and teachers to respond to the needs of individual students and of the local community.



## Key Initiatives

- **The ministry will develop, in co-operation with its partners in education, a province-wide curriculum for all levels of schooling, from Junior Kindergarten to the end of secondary school, in both English and French.**
  - The new provincial curriculum – Ontario’s **Common Curriculum** – will identify **outcomes** (descriptions of what students are expected to learn) and **standards** (descriptions of levels of achievement against which student learning is to be measured) for elementary and secondary education. Appropriate outcomes/expectations will be identified for Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten, and outcomes and standards developed for Grades 10 to 12. Outcomes, and standards in mathematics and language, have already been developed for Grades 1 to 9. Standards in the other curriculum areas – science and technology, the arts, and personal and social studies – will also be developed for these grades (see “Time Frame for Implementation” on page 8).
  - Implementation of the new curriculum will be supported and facilitated by **school-ready curriculum materials** for teachers. Such materials will be developed for all grades, drawing on existing curriculum materials and teacher expertise. The school-ready curriculum materials, as well as all learning materials for students, will positively reflect the contributions of people of both genders and of the various racial and ethnocultural groups represented in the classroom.
  - The ministry will develop the new curriculum and the school-ready curriculum materials in co-operation with teachers, students, parents, and representatives from the broader community, including business and labour. In addition, national and international experts will be consulted to ensure that the outcomes, standards, and curriculum are useful and meaningful beyond Ontario’s borders. Curriculum development will be carried out by working groups of experts drawn from school boards across the province, with co-ordination by the ministry.
- **The ministry will develop a standard report card for use by all schools across the province.**
  - The **standard report card** will allow teachers in all schools to monitor and report on students’ progress accurately and consistently. It will offer enough flexibility to accommodate local needs, while ensuring that student performance is measured, reported, and interpreted in the same way in all schools across the province. The report card will give parents and students consistent information about student achievement and will provide all parties with a clear basis for discussing student progress.

## Time Frame for Implementation

### Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten

- Fall 1995: A draft policy document outlining outcomes/expectations for the end of Kindergarten will be released and the development of school-ready curriculum materials will begin.
- September 1996: Field testing of school-ready curriculum materials will begin.
- Fall 1997: Final outcomes/expectations and school-ready curriculum materials will be released for use in schools.
- September 1998: Mandatory implementation of the above will begin.

### Grades 1 to 9

- February 1995: Provincial policy guidelines and outcomes for Grades 1 to 9, for both English- and French-language schools, were released.
- February 1995: Provincial standards in language and mathematics for Grades 1 to 9 were released for field testing in schools.
- March 1995: *Report to Parents: A Special Issue on the Common Curriculum* was released. (A copy was provided for every student.) Development of provincial curriculum materials begins.
- September 1996: Provincial curriculum materials will be released for use in schools. Mandatory implementation of policies and outcomes, and of the final standards for mathematics and language, will begin. Field testing of standards in the remaining curriculum areas will begin.
- September 1997: Final standards for the remaining curriculum areas will be released for implementation.

### Grades 10 to 12

- Spring 1996: Development of outcomes, standards, and school-ready curriculum materials will begin.
- September 1996: Implementation of new graduation requirements will begin (see "The Secondary School Program" on page 20).
- September 1997: Implementation of outcomes and standards in schools will begin. Standards for language and mathematics will be released. (The release date for standards in other key areas is still to be determined.)

### **Report Cards**

March 1995: Development of the standard report card begins.

1995-96 school year: Field testing of the report card will begin.

1996-97 school year: Province-wide use of the report cards in schools will begin.

### **Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead**

**Jill Hutcheon**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy Priorities and Curriculum Development Division

# 2 *Assessment and Accountability*

## Background

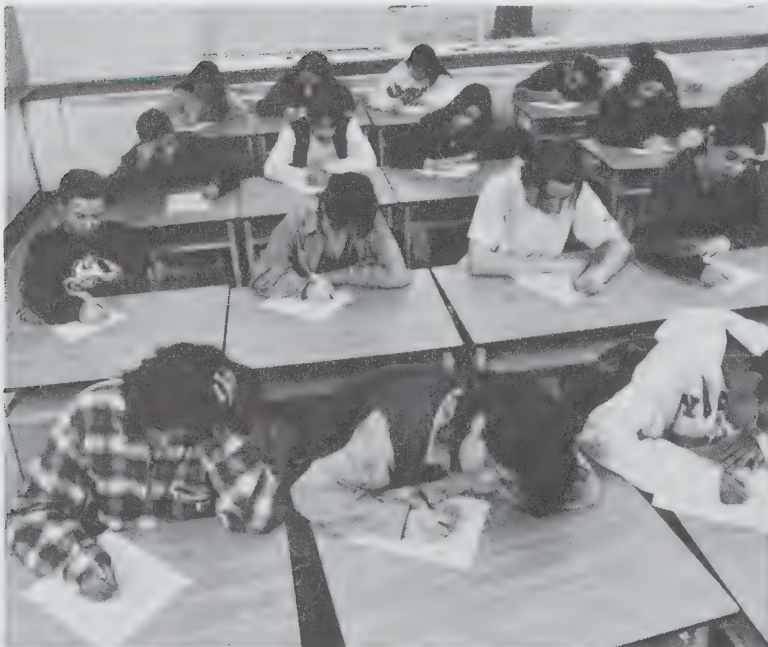
Parents have made it clear that they want relevant and consistent information on how well their children are learning at critical stages in their schooling. It is important for parents to know exactly what the schools' expectations are, and to have a context in which to place their children's achievements. Educators, as well, benefit from participating in high-quality assessment activities, which can help build excellent classroom practices.

Testing is one of a number of valuable assessment tools that can be used to improve learning and teaching in the classroom. Careful and reliable testing of students' progress can give parents, students, and the broader community a clear sense of how well students are performing at school and how well the school system as a whole is performing.

## Plan of Action

As outlined in the section "Province-wide Curriculum and Reporting", the ministry intends to develop clear and high provincial standards of achievement for students in all curriculum areas – mathematics, language, science and technology, the arts, and personal and social studies. Student achievement of these standards will be measured at regular intervals in students' careers (in Grades 3, 6, 9, and 11) through tests administered by a new independent agency, the Education Quality and Accountability Office. Because the agency will function at arm's length from the government, the public can have confidence that assessment is being carried out fairly and objectively and that test results will be used to improve student learning.

Consistent monitoring of student achievement will provide far-reaching benefits. As established standards and the results of tests become widely available, the information will allow teachers, students, parents, employers, and members of the public to have a much clearer idea of how well children are learning and how well the education system is functioning. An improved system of reporting will help students, the school councils (see "School Councils"), the boards (see "School Boards and Trustees"), and the ministry to evaluate the results of their work.



## Board of Directors of the Education Quality and Accountability Office

**Richard Johnston** (chair), Toronto: former member of the legislature and current chair, Council of Regents of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology

**Hoda ElMaraghy**, Windsor: Dean, Faculty of Engineering, University of Windsor, and Project Leader and Principal Investigator, Institute for Robotics and Intelligent Systems

**V. Maureen Kempston Darkes**, Oshawa: President and General Manager, General Motors of Canada Limited, and Vice-President, General Motors Corporation

**André Lalonde**, Toronto: President, l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, and former director of education, Metropolitan Toronto French-Language School Board

**Anthony Manera**, Ottawa: former president, Niagara College, Ontario, and Vancouver Community College, B.C., and former president and chief executive officer, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

**Fred Pomeroy**, Ottawa: Executive Vice-President and Treasurer, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada

**Dr. Bette Stephenson**, Toronto: former minister of education and current president, Gwillimbury Foundation for the Advancement of Post-Secondary Education

**Joan M. Green**, director of the Board of Education for the City of Toronto, will be the chief executive officer of the Education Quality and Accountability Office.

## Key Initiatives

- **The ministry will establish a province-wide annual testing program in reading, writing, and mathematics for all students in Grades 3, 6, 9, and 11. Participation in the testing program, which will be conducted in both English and French, will be mandatory for all school boards and their students in the province.**
  - The tests administered under the program will be based on the province-wide curriculum outcomes and standards.
  - The tests will be given to English- and French-language students in public and separate schools and those private schools that offer the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.
- **The ministry will establish an independent agency, the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), to implement its province-wide testing program in reading, writing, and mathematics for Grades 3, 6, 9, and 11, and to ensure quality and accountability in Ontario's education system.**
  - EQAO will have seven volunteer part-time board members, including a chair, and will be managed by a chief executive officer. It will report formally to the ministry and to the public.
  - EQAO will be responsible for:
    - developing the province-wide tests and managing their administration, in co-operation with school boards;
    - reporting the test results to the public;
    - identifying data that will help determine how well the education system at all levels is performing (for example, the proportion of students who graduate or who drop out of school; the percentage of students who enter college, university, or other training institutions; the incidence of violence and harassment in schools; the level of school board expenditures on instruction) and making recommendations for improvement (these recommendations will be communicated to all partners in education, including the general public);
    - managing Ontario's participation in national and international tests;
    - conducting research on assessment methods and accountability practices;
    - conducting reviews of school board programs;
    - improving the accountability of postsecondary institutions.

### Time Frame for Implementation

- February 1995: The seven members of the volunteer board of directors of EQAO were appointed.
- April 1995: The directors of EQAO will begin to meet to plan their activities.
- September 1996: The administration by EQAO of annual province-wide tests (in reading, writing, and mathematics for Grades 3, 6, 9, and 11) and the reporting of results will begin.

#### Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead

**Jill Hutcheon**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy Priorities and Curriculum Development Division

# 3 Early Learning and Literacy

## Background

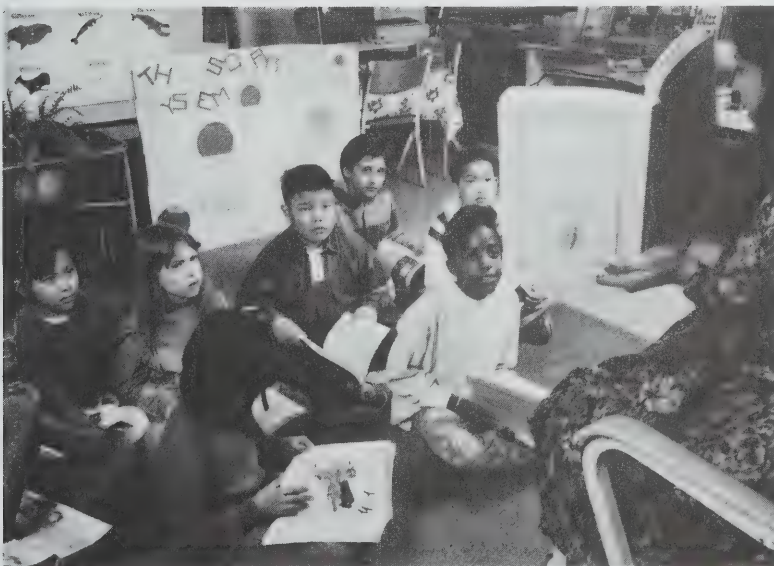
The report of the Royal Commission on Learning stressed the importance of early childhood education, which it described as “a carefully structured enterprise that combines an introduction to learning, often through play, with high-quality education.” The report also specifically emphasized the importance of early childhood education for the continued vigour of Ontario’s francophone communities.

The experiences of the preschool years, as many parents and teachers know, can significantly affect students’ later success in school. Research findings and practical experience indicate that much learning takes place in the years before a child starts Grade 1. We know that positive learning experiences help children to develop self-confidence and positive attitudes to learning and equip them with a strong foundation for the development of learning skills – skills that will be useful throughout their lives. We also know that an investment in early learning programs will result in long-term savings in both social service and educational costs.

Many parents in Ontario already recognize the benefits of early childhood education. In 1994, 101,745 children attended Junior Kindergarten and 139,417 attended Kindergarten. These figures represent about 85 per cent of four-year-olds and 95 per cent of five-year-olds in the communities where the programs are offered.

## Plan of Action

The future health of our school system and of our province requires that all young children develop the foundations for learning that they will need to succeed in school and in society.



To prepare students for a successful entry into the school system, the ministry is introducing four basic initiatives: mandated early literacy programs throughout the province; the Early Literacy Fund; an early childhood education curriculum; and the Early Childhood Education Program that will include an integrated child-care component for four- and five-year-olds.

The ministry and the royal commission agree that it is reasonable to expect almost all children to demonstrate that they have acquired basic literacy skills by the end of Grade 3. The mandated early literacy programs will include three strategies to enable

children from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 to achieve this outcome: (1) helping children in Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten to develop pre-reading skills; (2) strengthening the focus on reading and writing skills for all children in Grades 1 to 3; and (3) providing intensive instruction in order to reduce the number of students in special education programs. To help school boards to implement early literacy programs and to support other literacy initiatives, the ministry will establish the Early Literacy Fund.

Although the value of Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs is widely recognized, there is at present no general consensus about what these programs should contain and what they should be accomplishing. The new curriculum for Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten will, therefore, describe the intended outcomes of such programs so that parents, educators, and administrators can have a clear understanding of what programs for young children are expected to do.

The Early Childhood Education Program will eventually replace existing Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs with a full-day program combined with before-school and after-school child care. Blending the key elements of education and child care will allow schools to provide young children with high-quality programs while offering much-needed support to working parents.

In the first five years, the Early Childhood Education Program will operate as a pilot program in which children already in the system – those in Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten – will be encouraged to participate. This plan of action has several advantages: it ensures that the programs in place are of high quality; it allows the development of a sound and cost-effective model that can be adopted when the program becomes mandatory in the year 2000; and it is a fiscally responsible way to proceed at this time.

The Early Childhood Education Program will promote equality of outcomes for children from all socio-economic, ethnocultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and will help educators to identify and deal with barriers to learning as early as possible.

### Key Initiatives

#### Early Literacy

- **The ministry will require all school boards in the province to provide early literacy programs for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3.**
- **The ministry will establish the Early Literacy Fund to help boards implement their early literacy programs and to support other initiatives that promote early literacy.**
  - The fund will provide \$38 million over five years to help boards carry out plans for the mandated early literacy programs and related initiatives. Such initiatives might include:
    - remedial programs for children who are having problems learning to read, write, and speak well;
    - activities that will encourage parents and other people in the community to help children read well;
    - provisions for addressing the needs of children from a variety of backgrounds, including francophone students, Native students, and those with a first language other than English or French.

## Early Childhood Education Curriculum

- **In the short term, the ministry will develop a curriculum for existing Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs.**
  - The curriculum will:
    - ensure that existing early-education programs across the province are of consistently high quality;
    - form the basis of the new Early Childhood Education Program (see below);
    - identify the outcomes that children are expected to achieve by the end of Kindergarten;
    - include activities that will help children develop learning skills and that will foster their social and emotional development;
    - give children a firm foundation for Grade 1 and beyond.

## Early Childhood Education Program

- **Over the long term, the ministry will establish a comprehensive Early Childhood Education Program for four- and five-year-olds. The program will be developed in consultation with the education and child-care communities, including parents.**
  - The provision of the program will eventually be mandatory for school boards, but its use will remain optional for parents. Parents who decide to use the program will be able to choose between several options: a half-day program, a full-day program, or the extended-day program that will include child care.
  - The program will eventually replace the existing Junior Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and child-care programs for this age group.
  - The program will run year-round from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and will be operated in schools and community sites.
  - No fees will be charged for the publicly funded school hours. Parents and guardians will pay for any time before 9:00 a.m. and after 3:30 p.m. and for the summer months. Child-care subsidies will be available, based on parents' ability to pay.
  - The program will be staffed by a team of certified teachers, early childhood educators, and teaching assistants.
  - The program will begin as a pilot program in demonstration sites in both urban and rural parts of the province (see "Time Frame for Implementation" on page 16).

## Time Frame for Implementation

### Early Literacy Programs

- September 1995: Directions will be released by the ministry requiring school boards to develop plans for early literacy programs by September 1996.
- September 1996: Implementation of approved plans by school boards will begin.

### Early Childhood Education Curriculum

- Fall 1995: A draft policy document outlining outcomes/expectations for children at the end of Kindergarten will be released.
- Fall 1996: School-ready curriculum materials will be available for field testing.
- September 1997: The final Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten outcomes/expectations and school-ready curriculum materials will be released for use in schools.
- September 1998: Mandatory implementation of the above will begin.

### Early Childhood Education Program

- Phase I – 1995-2000: In the spring of 1995, the ministry will invite public and separate school boards to make submissions for demonstration projects. The projects will begin in September 1995 with 500 students and grow to include 2,500 students in the following year. The program will be evaluated and refined during this stage.
- Phase II – 2000: Phased-in implementation of the Early Childhood Education Program throughout the province will begin. (The program will be phased in as space and funding become available.) It will be mandatory for boards to offer the program.

### Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead

**Ouida Wright**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Antiracism, Access, and Equity Division

# 4 Teacher Education

## Background

Teachers are the key to excellence in education. They have one of the most important and most challenging jobs in our society – helping students acquire the knowledge, skills, and values that they will need to participate in society. Teachers are on the front lines of education. It is they who bear the immediate, day-to-day responsibility of giving direction to learning and of encouraging and helping Ontario's students to progress. To help them meet the challenge of preparing students for life in a rapidly changing world, teachers must be given opportunities to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills.

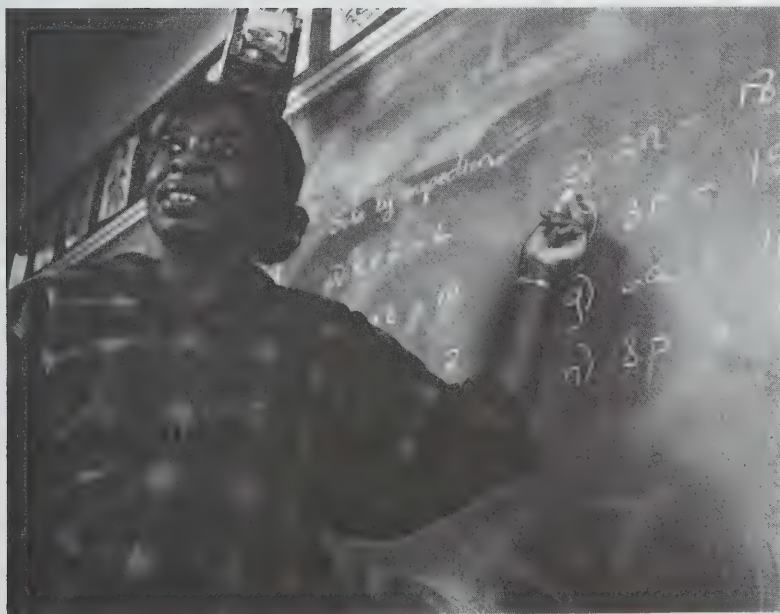
In Canada, the need for changes in teacher education has been the focus of several important studies, and teacher education reforms are being undertaken in at least five provinces other than Ontario. Teacher education – in faculties of education or on the job – must be responsive to the complexities of today's society and to the equally complex needs of students.

## Plan of Action

To ensure that teachers continue to be well prepared for the many challenges they face in the classroom and that they keep their knowledge and skills up to date, the ministry will establish the Ontario College of Teachers, an independent body that will regulate the teaching profession. In addition, it will introduce a revised two-year teacher education program and new standards for teacher education and accreditation, as well as other changes designed to improve the quality of teacher education.

The Ontario College of Teachers will develop standards of practice for the teaching profession, procedures for certification, and a provincial framework for professional development. It will promote continual improvement to raise the already high level of commitment and expertise within the profession.

These reforms will encourage high standards of excellence in teaching and put Ontario in the forefront of teacher education in North America.



## Members of the Implementation Committee for the Ontario College of Teachers

**Frank Clifford** (chair), Waterloo: former executive director, Teacher Education Council of Ontario, and former director, Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board

**Katherine Bardswick**, Toronto: Metro region vice-president, The Co-operators Financial Services

**Anne Gagné**, Penetanguishene: former superintendent of French-language schools, Simcoe County Roman Catholic Separate School Board

**Carol Gott**, Grey County: president, Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare, executive director, South East Grey Community Outreach, and chair, Ontario Rural Childcare Committee

**Andy Hargreaves**, Toronto: director and professor, International Centre for Educational Change, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

**Jim Head**, Toronto: development officer, Training and Community Services, Board of Education for the City of Scarborough, and past president, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation and Ontario Teachers' Federation

**MacArthur Hunter**, Toronto: principal, Driftwood Public School, Board of Education for the City of North York

(continued)

## Key Initiatives

- **The ministry will increase the teacher education program to two years.**
  - The revised two-year program will give student teachers more classroom experience, so they can better integrate theory and practice.
- **The ministry will require all new teachers to pass a qualifying examination in order to be certified and all practising teachers to renew their certificate every five years by participating in ongoing professional development activities.**
  - The professional development activities will enable teachers to maintain and improve the knowledge and skills they will need to be effective teachers in an environment of constant change.
- **The ministry will establish the Ontario College of Teachers.**
  - The college will take part in and oversee the reform of teacher education, govern the teaching profession, and respond to public complaints.
  - It will report annually to the ministry and the public on its activities.
  - Members of the college's governing body will include: teachers from both English- and French-language schools; parents; students; staff of faculties of education, school boards, and the ministry; and representatives of the private sector.
  - An implementation committee will advise the ministry on the process of establishing the college and defining the terms of its mandate.
  - The college will be responsible for:
    - developing the two-year teacher education program;
    - determining the program outcomes for the new two-year teacher education program. The outcomes will identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that teachers must have when they enter the profession;
    - accrediting teacher education programs;
    - developing clear standards of practice for the teaching profession. The standards will identify what teachers in Ontario schools should know and be able to do throughout their careers. The standards will apply to all educators who are certified to teach in Ontario, including principals, superintendents, and directors of education, professors at faculties of education, and ministry staff;
    - designing a provincial framework for the professional development of teachers. The framework will apply to all teachers and other people holding an Ontario Teacher's Certificate, including principals, superintendents, and directors of education. Teachers will be required to participate in ongoing professional development activities to maintain and improve the knowledge and skills identified as priorities by school boards, the province, and the college;
    - overseeing the promotion of leadership skills for principals and supervisory officers;

**D'Arcy Martin**, Toronto: national representative (education), Communications, Energy and Paperworkers' Union of Canada

**Deborah Anne Murray**, Haileybury: teacher, New Liskeard Public School, Timiskaming Board of Education, and member of executive and former member of board of directors, Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario

**Marielle Simon**, Ottawa: assistant professor and director of professional development programs, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

**Betty Moseley-Williams**, North Bay: trustee and former chair of board, Nipissing District Roman Catholic Separate School Board, former director, Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association, and former president, Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association

**Margaret Wilson**, of Toronto, formerly secretary-treasurer of the Ontario Teachers' Federation, will be the first registrar of the Ontario College of Teachers.

- developing procedures for initial teacher certification and renewal of certification, as well as for the preparation and evaluation of teachers who received their training outside the province;
- accrediting professional development programs;
- overseeing the development of a complaints process for students and parents that respects existing collective bargaining agreements and due process.

### Time Frame for Implementation

- February 1995: The implementation committee for the Ontario College of Teachers was set up and began its work.
- September 1995: The implementation committee for the Ontario College of Teachers will report to the Minister.
- 1995-96: Beginning in the spring of 1995, the ministry will fund pilot teacher training programs to be carried out by faculties of education. The ministry has begun to accept applications from faculties of education.
- September 1996: Standards for practising teachers will be released. Certification and renewal of certification will be based on the standards. Outcomes for teacher education programs will be released.
- January 1997: Implementation of the framework for professional development will begin.
- July 1997: Criteria for initial certification will be introduced, and an orientation process for teachers trained outside the province will come into operation.
- September 1997: The two-year teacher education program will begin. Procedures for initial certification and renewal of certification on a five-year cycle will go into operation.
- June 1999: Entry-into-profession qualifying examination will come into effect. All new teachers will have to pass the examination in order to be certified.

### Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead

**Jill Hutcheon**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy Priorities and Curriculum Development Division

# 5 The Secondary School Program

## Background

In recent years, the secondary school system has been successful in meeting a number of challenges: it has achieved an improvement in graduation rates and an increase in the number of high school graduates who attend university and college, and it has expanded its co-operative education programs. Nevertheless, parents and taxpayers believe that high schools can do more to prepare young people to play a productive role in society and the economy.

The Royal Commission on Learning highlighted the need to reform Ontario's secondary schools. The fact that 55 per cent of graduates do not enter college or university, it suggested, indicates that for many students secondary school education lacks a clear purpose and a well-defined outcome. The royal commission also observed that Ontario is the only province with more than four years of secondary school.

All high school students, whether they are preparing for further education or training or the work force, need more extensive support from schools to prepare for life after they leave secondary school.

## Plan of Action

In partnership with those who have a stake in education, the ministry plans to revise the secondary school program so that it will meet the needs of all students, in particular those who are planning to enter college, other training institutions, or the workplace after they leave secondary school.

To make informed decisions about their future, students need good advice from professionals, improved access to up-to-date career information, a solid base of relevant knowledge and skills, and clear and flexible pathways to the worlds of work, training, college, and university.

Reforms to the secondary school program will include a focus on career awareness and preparation, on work experience for students, and on clear and flexible links between the secondary school program and training and college programs.

To ensure continuity for students as they progress from elementary school through secondary school, the revised secondary curriculum will be consistent with and will build on the curriculum in Grades 1 to 9.



## Key Initiatives

- **The ministry will revise the secondary school program so that students complete their graduation requirements in four years after Grade 8.**
- **The ministry will develop policies that will ensure that students have access to:**
  - **increased guidance and support in the areas of educational and career planning;**
  - **expanded work experience;**
  - **clear and flexible links between secondary school and further education or training or work.**
- The ministry will help schools to improve their guidance and career education programs and to provide students and parents with the assistance and resources they need to make informed choices about education programs and postsecondary education, training, and work opportunities. More specifically, the ministry will:
  - develop new policies for guidance and career education programs;
  - develop a training program for guidance counsellors, in co-operation with the Ontario College of Teachers;
  - promote projects that demonstrate links between schools and community-based career-counselling services;
  - expand the electronic career information system known as “Gateway to Opportunities”;
  - make available career education materials for students, parents, and teachers.
- The ministry will also help schools to expand their co-operative education and work experience programs by:
  - providing incentives for schools to create innovative co-operative education programs in partnership with community groups;
  - providing professional development opportunities for teachers in Grades 7 to 12 to increase their participation in work experience programs.
- As well, to assist schools in developing clear and flexible links to college or training programs or work that will assist students in their transition from secondary school to further education or work, the ministry will:
  - recommend ways of linking secondary school programs with college programs;
  - fund pilot projects that will provide linkages between secondary school and college programs;
  - develop a structured transition-to-work program that will combine in-school education with workplace-based training for students planning to work after secondary school.
- **The ministry will develop a relevant provincial curriculum for all secondary school grades (see also “Province-wide Curriculum and Reporting”).**
  - The new curriculum will build on the curriculum for Grades 1 to 9 and will enable all students in Grades 10 to 12 to acquire a common core of knowledge, skills, and values in the areas of language, mathematics, science, technology, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills.
  - Outcomes and standards for Grades 10 to 12 that build on those for Grades 1 to 9 will also be developed.

- The new curriculum will better prepare students for life after secondary school by providing such things as:
  - clearer connections to college and other training programs;
  - a revised guidance and career education program.

• **The ministry will introduce province-wide testing in mathematics and language for students in Grades 9 and 11 (see also “Assessment and Accountability”).**

- The results of the tests will provide teachers with the information they need to help individual students meet the requirements for Grade 12 graduation and make informed choices about programs.

### Time Frame for Implementation

March 1995:	“Gateway to Opportunities”, the new electronic career-information system, is being expanded.
April 1995:	The development of new requirements for graduation will begin.
September 1995:	<p>The expansion of co-operative education and work experience opportunities will begin. Professional development opportunities for teachers to increase their participation in work experience programs will begin.</p> <p>Distribution of career education materials to schools will begin.</p> <p>Implementation of demonstration projects that link schools to community-based career-counselling services will begin.</p> <p>Implementation of a structured transition-to-work program that combines in-school education with workplace-based training will begin.</p> <p>A request for proposals for pilot projects that will strengthen linkages between secondary school and college programs will be sent to school boards and colleges.</p>
Spring 1996:	New secondary school graduation requirements will be released.
September 1996:	<p>Implementation of the new four-year program will begin for students starting Grade 9.</p> <p>Implementation of new guidance and career education policies will begin. The training of guidance counsellors will begin.</p>

- 1996-97 school year: Testing in mathematics and language for Grade 9 and 11 students will be implemented under the direction of the Education Quality and Accountability Office.
- September 1997: Implementation of outcomes and performance standards and the provincial curriculum for Grades 10 to 12 will begin.
- September 1999: Implementation of the transition-to-work program will be completed.

**Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead**

**Joan Andrew**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Open Learning and Training Division

# Information Technology

## Background

In today's information-based society, the ability to use information technology is essential. Educators, parents, and the general public agree that, as early in their schooling as possible, students should have opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in this area. Teachers, too, must be given the training they need to teach information-technology skills and to keep abreast of new technology as it is introduced.

Despite budgetary constraints, a number of school boards have established excellent information-technology systems in their schools. Nevertheless, the large expenditures involved in acquiring information-technology hardware and software make it difficult for many schools to include a significant information-technology component in the curriculum.

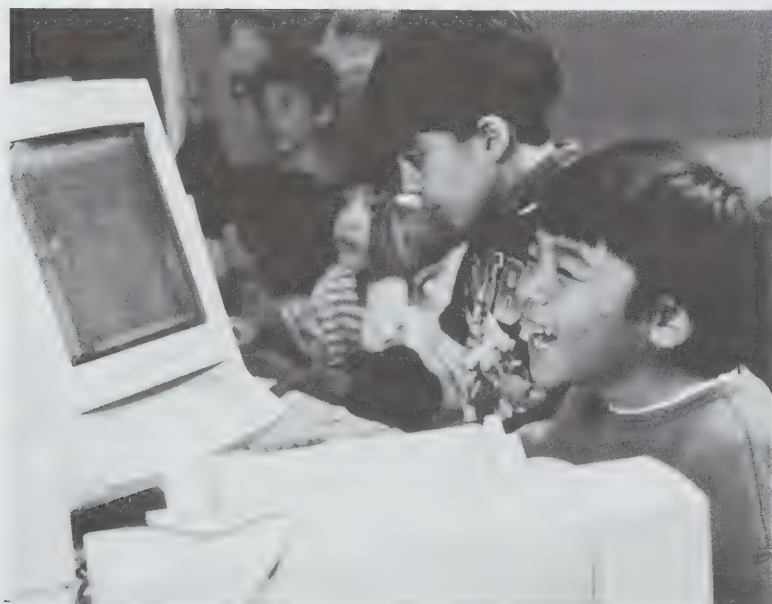
At present, much of the computer-based technology in many schools is obsolete or in poor condition. Even when a school's equipment is adequate, there is frequently not enough for the number of students. These problems are compounded by a lack of local technical support for students and teachers. As well, school buildings, most of which were built before the microcomputer era, lack the physical infrastructure to accommodate networking facilities.

## Plan of Action

The Royal Commission on Learning reported enthusiastically on the potential of information technology for promoting learning. The ministry recognizes that such technology is an important classroom tool that can give students and teachers access to the educational resources of worldwide computer networks. Improved networking facilities would also strengthen communication links

among administrators and educators and encourage the sharing of educational resources and administrative processes across the school system and beyond it. Such improvements could change the Ontario education system into a model user of information technology.

The ministry's goal is to increase the number of computers in the province's schools to one computer for every ten students by the year 2000. It also plans to encourage increased use of networking facilities and to link more classrooms to existing networks such as the Ontario Education Highway, currently used by the educational community.



The achievement of these goals will provide educators and students with a multitude of benefits. Computer-based technology will allow teachers to tailor instruction to the needs of individual students and to remove barriers to learning, expanding learning opportunities for students with special needs through computer access to educational resources. As well, educators will be able to use information technology to track students' progress and to respond to requests for information from the public (for example, to answer inquiries about the summary results of province-wide testing). Improving the education system's networking capability will allow classrooms and school offices to communicate with each other more efficiently.

### Key Initiatives

- **The ministry will co-ordinate an investment of up to \$500 million over the next five years and up to \$100 million annually thereafter for technology. The funding will be obtained through partnerships between the government, school boards, and private businesses, as well as through reallocation of existing funds.**
  - The funding will be used to:
    - provide more computers for Ontario classrooms. Approximately 40,000 new computers will be placed in classrooms annually over the next five years;
    - increase students' and teachers' access to the educational resources of worldwide computer networks. Schools will be linked to these networks and to each other through the Ontario Education Highway. All new schools will be required to install computer networking facilities. As part of this initiative, the Ministries of Education and Training and of Economic Development and Trade will provide funding to the Education Network of Ontario, a teachers' network, to help make the network's resources available to many more Ontario educators;
    - support the development and acquisition of new educational software through the Ontario Software Acquisition Program. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade will initiate a \$15-million investment program to encourage Ontario companies to develop software based on the curriculum.
- **The ministry will establish the Education Information Technology Alliance to promote and support the integration of information technology into the classroom.**
  - The alliance will bring together groups from Ontario's school system and the private sector to help school boards create joint plans for improving their equipment and to develop provincial standards for technology.

- **The ministry will revise the terms of the provincial grants for computer acquisition to permit school boards to purchase or lease up to 5 per cent of new computers for the use of classroom teachers and to allocate up to 10 per cent of their provincial computer grants for technical and professional support for classroom teachers.**
  - School boards will be encouraged to take into account economic and demographic factors when allocating information-technology resources to their schools in order to ensure equitable distribution, and to increase community access to the information technology available in schools.
- **The ministry will ensure that the teaching of information-technology skills throughout elementary and secondary school is integrated into the new province-wide curriculum that is being developed.**

### Time Frame for Implementation

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Spring 1995:    | An interim committee will prepare the framework for the Education Information Technology Alliance.   |
| September 1995: | The Education Information Technology Alliance will begin operation.  |
| 1995-2000:      | The ministry will match funds committed by private businesses and school boards, to invest up to \$500 million in information technology in the school system. |

### Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead

**Jan Donio**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Organization Development and Services Division

# School Councils

## Background

All sectors of society have a stake in the education system because the way students are educated has a direct impact on the future of Ontario. The education of the province's youth should therefore be a collaborative undertaking involving all sectors. As well, parents and the community as a whole can offer a wealth of experience and expertise that will benefit the education system.

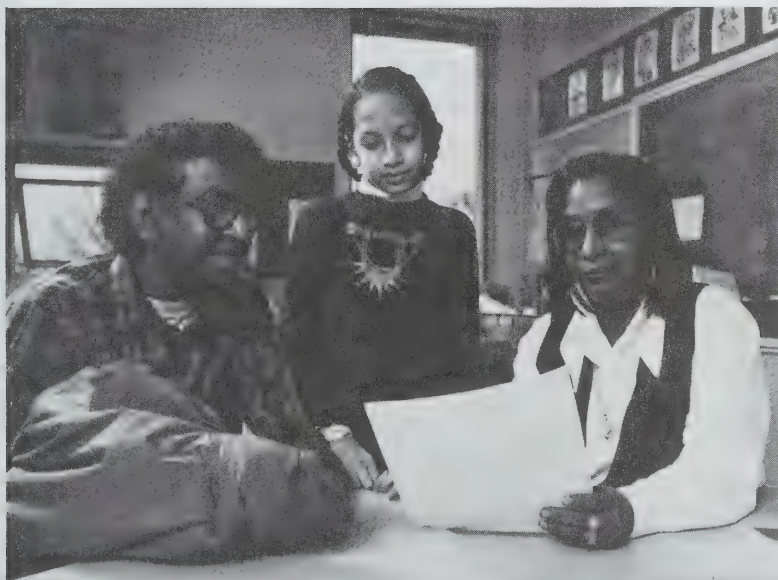
In order to encourage greater parental participation in education, the ministry established the Ontario Parent Council in November 1993. The council advises the Minister on schools, education, and parental concerns in Ontario. Both the council and the Royal Commission on Learning have recommended the establishment of individual school councils as the next logical step towards giving parents a greater say in how schools are run and strengthening partnerships with the community.

## Plan of Action

The involvement and participation of parents, students, and ratepayers in local schools will be increased significantly through the establishment of school councils in all schools in the province. It is anticipated that the many existing school advisory groups, which are similar to the model that is being proposed, will evolve into the required school councils. School councils will provide advice on a range of important issues.

## Key Initiatives

- **The ministry will require all schools in Ontario to establish school councils to provide advice to principals on school-related issues and to strengthen links between schools and communities. All school boards and minority-language sections of boards will be required to develop a policy that will ensure that a school council is set up in each school. School board policies must include the minimum requirements for the composition and operation of school councils outlined below.**
  - Members of a school council must include:
    - parents (elected by parents);
    - a student (selected by the student body and obligatory only in secondary schools; in elementary schools, principals will decide whether student participation is appropriate);



- community representatives (appointed by the school council);
- the school principal;
- a teacher (selected by the teachers);
- another member of staff (selected by non-teaching staff).
- The majority of members must be parents, and the chair will be elected from among the parent members. Councils may include more than the minimum number of members from any one category (except, of course, the principal), as long as parents remain in the majority. Membership on school councils will be voluntary, and members will receive no honorarium and will serve for one or two years, depending on board policy.
- School councils will advise principals and, where appropriate, school boards on such issues as:
  - curriculum and program priorities;
  - methods of reporting to parents and the community;
  - selection of principals;
  - school budget priorities;
  - community use of school facilities;
  - the school-year calendar;
  - the school code of student behaviour;
  - school-based services and community partnerships related to health, nutrition, social, and recreational programs.
- School councils will meet at least four times a year. The members will communicate regularly with parents and the community, and council meetings will be open to members of the school community.
- The ministry will assist school boards and schools in developing school councils by:
  - providing school boards with guidelines for the implementation of school councils;
  - developing, in consultation with school boards, community groups, and professional associations, a handbook for schools that will contain information and resource materials to assist them in developing school councils;
  - sponsoring a School Council Forum to enable the people who set up school councils to share information and effective practices.
- **As a related initiative, the ministry will develop, in consultation with parents, students, and others with an interest in education, a parents' statement of rights and responsibilities and a similar students' statement.**

### Time Frame for Implementation

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| April 1995:     | A policy/program memorandum that will require school boards to begin developing a policy on the establishment of school councils in their schools will be sent to all boards. |
| June 1995:      | The statements of parents' and students' rights and responsibilities will be released.  |
| September 1995: | The school council handbook will be distributed to all schools, school boards, and school councils.   |
- Schools will begin to establish school councils.

Spring 1996: The School Council Forum will be held.

June 1996: School councils will be fully operational.

**Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead**

**Mariette Carrier-Fraser**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Elementary, Secondary, and Postsecondary Operations and French-Language Education Division

# 8 School Boards and Trustees

## Background

Currently, the province has a total of 168 school boards. Four French-language boards and many minority-language sections of other boards provide French-language education in Ontario. Fifty boards have five schools or fewer; of these, thirty-four boards have only one school. Many boards have their own administrative bureaucracy, operate their own student transportation system, and have their own payroll and purchasing administration. In many cases, they have their own printing and warehousing facilities and computer systems.

Some real progress has been made in parts of the province to reduce duplication and waste. But despite these efforts, not nearly enough has been done in the field to formalize co-operative agreements and to realize savings.

## Plan of Action

The ministry believes that by streamlining the administration of the Ontario education system, it can make more money available to support and enhance classroom teaching. To achieve this objective, it intends to reduce the number of school boards by between 40 and 50 per cent. The role, focus, and business practices of school boards will be reformed, and boards will be reorganized. In some cases, boards will be amalgamated with other boards. The school board reforms will respect the constitutional requirement to maintain public and separate school systems and will ensure full governance of French-language education by the francophone community.

In addition, school boards will be expected to increase their efficiency by collaborating in the sharing of costs, services, and ideas.

The ministry also intends to reduce the number of trustees. Thus, even though boards may administer more schools following amalgamation, they will not necessarily have more trustees.

## Key Initiatives

- The ministry will reduce the overall number of school boards by 40 to 50 per cent through a revision of school board boundaries and amalgamation of school boards.
  - The four-member Ontario School Board Reduction Task Force, which was created in February 1995, will carry out the revision of school board boundaries and oversee the reduction and consolidation of school boards.



## Members of the Ontario School Board Reduction Task Force

**John Sweeney** (chair), Kitchener: chancellor, University of St. Jerome's College, former Minister of Municipal Affairs, of Housing, and of Community and Social Services, and former director, Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board

**Jean-Louis Bourdeau**, North Bay: former president, l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, former executive director, l'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario, former chair, Advisory Commission on French-Language Colleges, Northern Ontario and South/Central Ontario, and former school business official

**Duncan Green**, Toronto: independent education consultant, former director, Board of Education for the City of Toronto, and former assistant deputy minister, Ministry of Education

**Dorothy M. Wight**, Belle Vallée: former trustee, Lambton County Board of Education and Timiskaming Board of Education, and former director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association, Northeastern Ontario region

- The existing seventy-seven French-language school boards, sections of boards, and advisory committees currently responsible for French-language education will be consolidated into a maximum of fifteen French-language school boards.
- **The ministry will introduce legislation to reduce duplication of costs and services among school boards and make more money available for the classroom.**
  - The proposed legislation will:
    - require school boards to share services and personnel;
    - limit the amount of money school boards can spend on administration;
    - require school boards to report their savings to the public each year.
- **The ministry will reduce the number of trustees and develop a new formula for their representation and distribution. In addition, the ministry will limit the total compensation for a trustee to \$20,000 per year.**

### Time Frame for Implementation

- February 1995: The Ontario School Board Reduction Task Force was created and began its work.
- September 1995: The task force will release for public consultation a map of proposed new school board boundaries and will begin public consultations about the proposals in each region of the province.
- December 1995: The task force will present to the Minister its final recommendations for new school board boundaries, including those for new French-language school boards.
- January 1996 to December 1997: The task force will work with school boards and unions to monitor and assist them as they plan and carry out activities related to the establishment of the new boundaries.
- Spring 1996: School boards will begin their mandatory annual reports of cost savings achieved through the sharing of services.
- Fall 1997: Municipal elections will be held on the basis of the new school board boundaries and reduced number of boards. Trustee positions will be determined in time for the elections. Following the municipal elections, the new limit on compensation for trustees will come into effect.
- January 1998: Full implementation of new school boards will be complete.

### Ministry of Education and Training Executive Lead

**Mariette Carrier-Fraser**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Elementary, Secondary, and Postsecondary Operations and French-Language Education Division

# Conclusion

A combination of factors is needed to ensure that policy initiatives are put into practice. Requirements for effective implementation include: (1) commitment and support from interested parties and the public; (2) appropriate expertise; and (3) sufficient resources.

1. At present, support is strong within the province for reform of the education system. Many organizations and individuals with a stake in education see the ministry's initiatives as an opportunity for action that is long overdue.
2. Where the expertise needed for implementation of policy initiatives is not immediately available, the ministry will provide support and leadership to promote the development of skills, and to facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge, and skills.
3. To help provide the resources needed for implementation, the ministry will work to reallocate existing financial resources and to redesign parts of the education system to reduce duplication and waste. It will also establish partnerships with school boards, other education organizations, and the private sector, and will seek out new resources wherever possible.

It is also important to develop appropriate implementation and support mechanisms for each of the major initiatives. The creation of the Ontario College of Teachers and the Education Quality and Accountability Office and the appointment of the special adviser on implementation are actions that have been taken to ensure that the momentum for reform is maintained.

The ministry is committed to providing the necessary vision and leadership for bringing about change. It is committed to ongoing consultation with educators and community partners, so that its vision and direction continue to reflect Ontarians' educational priorities. Above all, it is committed to keeping the student and the classroom at the centre of its vision for educational renewal.





Ministry of Education and Training



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